

Basic image editing with Paint.NET software

“Photoshop it” is a catch cry that we all hear when a suggestion is made to edit an image, however, do we necessarily need to “Photoshop it”? After all, Adobe Photoshop is not free, and while many of us use it there are other programs out there that can be considered as viable alternatives to carry out basic editing. In this tutorial I will be running you through some basic steps with Paint.NET which offers outstanding image editing results for free or via donation.

An outstanding feature of Paint.NET is the forum, where plugins can be downloaded to enhance Paint.NET’s functionality. These plugins are akin to Photoshop and its plugins and brushes, with something available for almost every single scenario that you are likely to encounter, where the basic version lacks certain ‘factory tools’. I would encourage all too only download from the Paint.NET website and forum, and not other external resources that claim to be affiliated.

Paint.NET website: <https://www.getpaint.net>

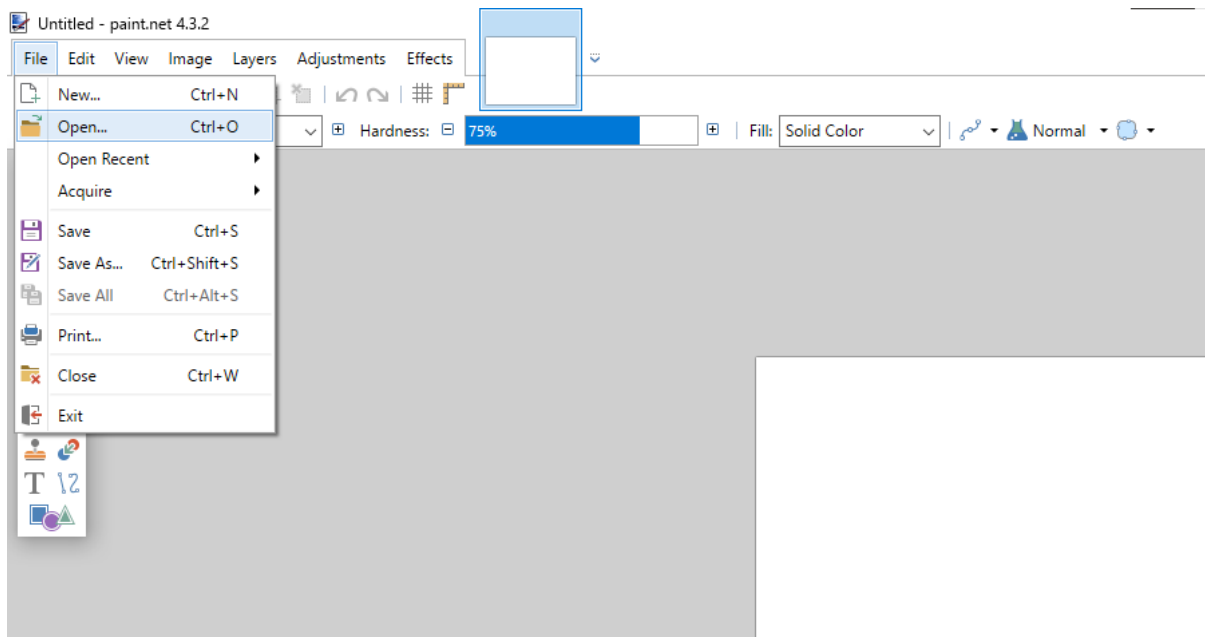
Direct Download: <https://www.dotpdn.com/files/paint.net.4.3.2.install.anycpu.web.zip>

Paint.NET forums: <https://forums.getpaint.net>

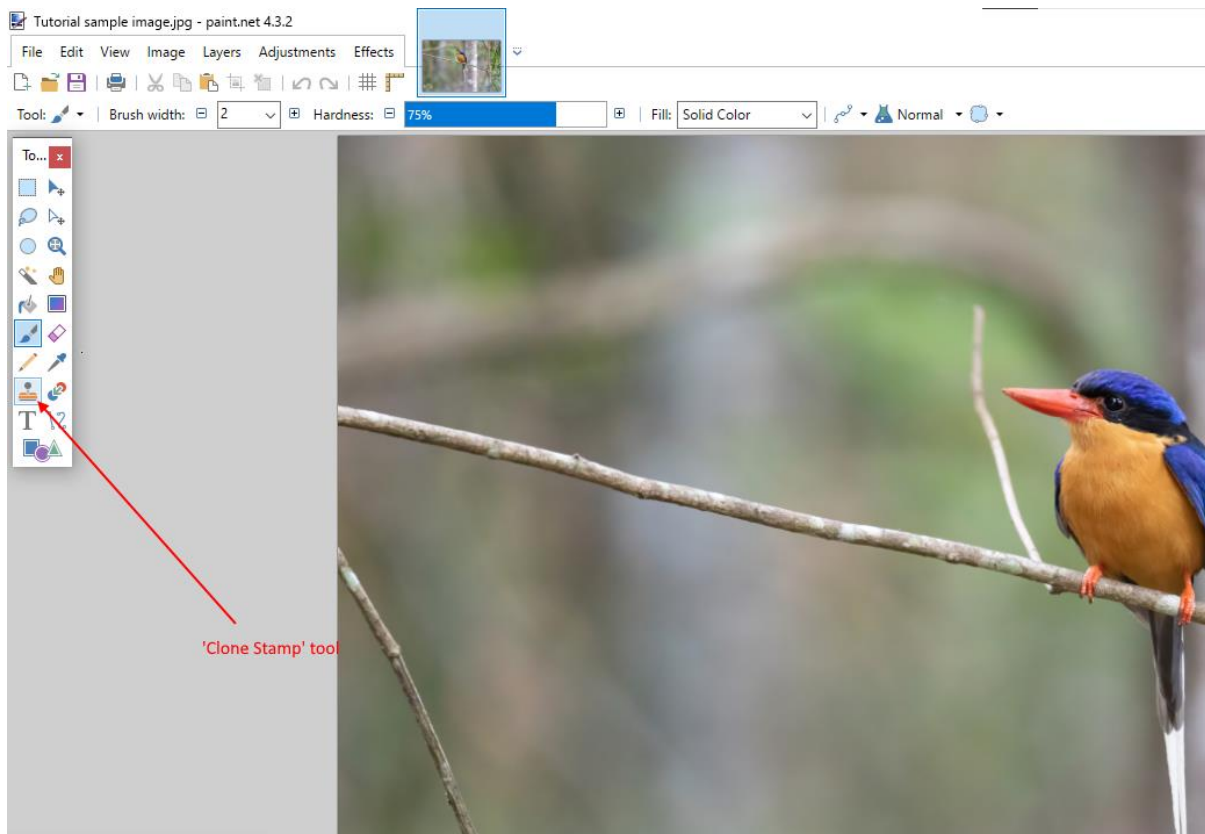
The image which I will be editing in this tutorial is that of the below Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher. The left image is as photographed, whilst the image on the right will be the end result after removing the annoying little branch to the left of the bird.



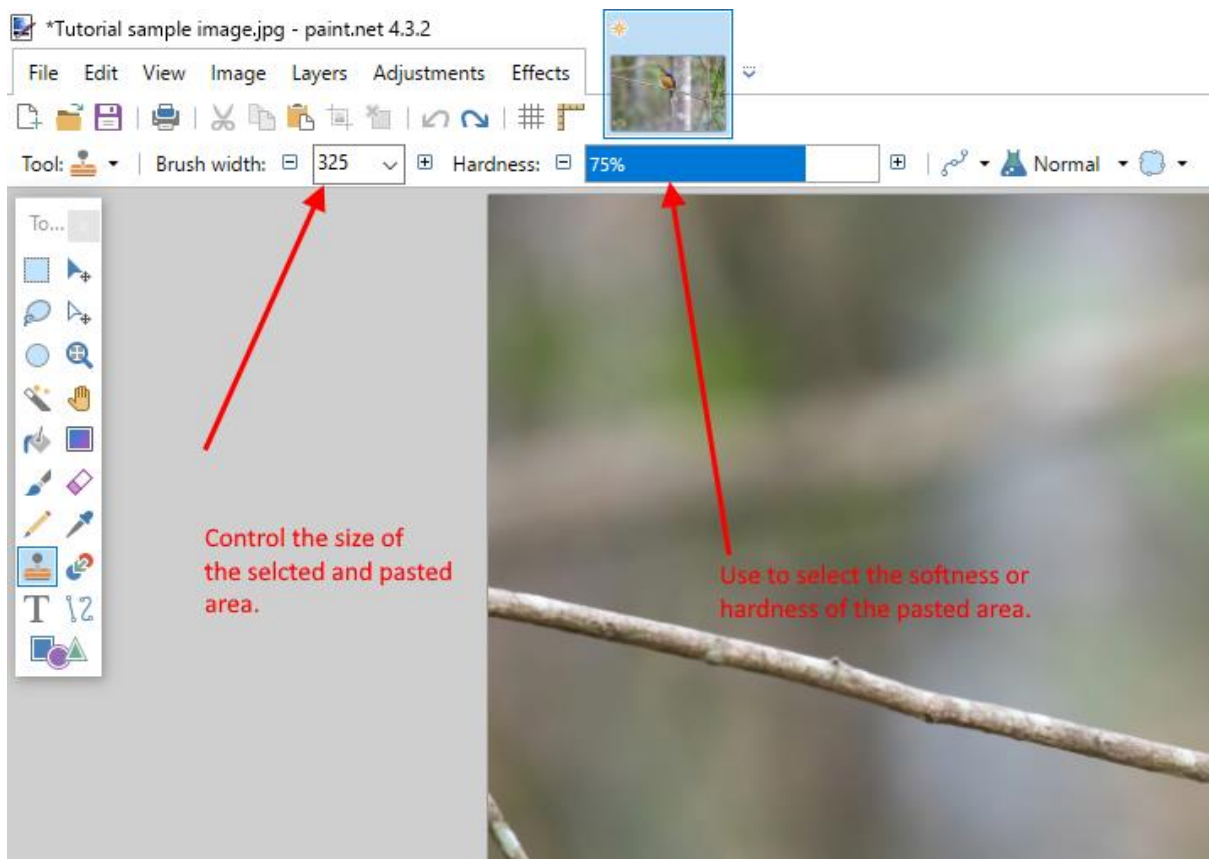
Once Paint.NET has been downloaded and set up, click 'File' then choose 'Open' to open up an existing image.



With the image open, the bulk of what we are about to do will be done using the 'Clone Stamp' as indicated in the below image:



'Clone Stamp' does exactly what the name suggests; you select an area by clicking on it whilst holding down the CNTRL key, then releasing the CNTRL key and click on an area that you intend to paste the selected area.



In the below image, I have used the 'Clone Stamp' tool to select the highlighted area by holding down the CNTRL key and clicking at the same time:



After selecting a couple of different area to copy and paste via the 'Clone Stamp' tool, we end up with the below image where we have already removed a large portion of the unwanted stick.



And once we keep moving forward by selecting parts of the image to copy and then paste, we eventually end up with the final result on the left.

This did involve mixing up the 'Hardness' from time to time, and also 'undoing' and 'redoing' things occasionally until happy with the end result.

On the odd occasion I also had to select an area which I already pasted over the branch and paste it again to create a smoother background blend.

Note: Paint.NET has other tools such as an eraser, brushes, layers, blurs, noise (reduction & inclusion), etc., and thus I would strongly recommend reading tutorials and watching Youtube videos to familiarise yourself with everything it has to offer. I am a proficient Photoshop user, and I can confidently do anything on here that I can also do on Photoshop... and it is free!